

INTRODUCTION

This report is one in a series of reports that depict water-level changes since 1977 and compaction of subsurface material since 1973. The report was prepared in cooperation with the Harris-Galveston Coastal Subsidence District and the City of Houston, and presents maps showing the approximate changes in water levels in wells completed in the Chicot and Evangeline aquifers, 1977-92 and 1991-92 (figs. 1-4), and measured compaction, 1973-91 (figs. 5 and 6), in the Houston-Galveston region. The Houston-Galveston region includes Harris and Galveston Counties and adjacent parts of Brazoria, Fort Bend, Waller, Montgomery, Liberty, and Chambers Counties.

GEOHYDROLOGY

The Chicot aquifer and the underlying Evangeline aquifer are composed of discontinuous sedimentary deposits of sand, silt, and clay, which thicken to the southeast in the Houston-Galveston region (Williams and Ranzau, 1987). In most of the region, the water in the aquifers is fresh (less than 1,000 milligrams per liter dissolved-solids concentration). The primary basis for separating the Chicot aquifer from the underlying Evangeline aquifer is a difference in hydraulic conductivity. The hydraulic conductivity is larger in the Chicot aquifer and, in part, causes the difference in the altitude of the water levels in wells completed in the two aquifers (Meyer and Carr, 1979). The water levels in wells completed in the Chicot aquifer are at a higher altitude than the water levels in wells completed in the Evangeline aquifer. In the western and northern parts of the region, the aquifers crop out and are under water-table conditions. In the southern and eastern parts of the region, the aquifers are under artesian conditions. Because there is a small hydraulic connection between the two aquifers and between the Chicot aquifer and the land surface, the system is termed "leaky" (Carr and others, 1985). The Chicot and Evangeline aquifers are confined underneath Galveston Bay and Lake Houston by the Beaumont clay. The water-level surface in the Houston-Galveston region, in effect, may be considered to represent a system of intersecting cones of depression caused by water withdrawn from numerous wells throughout the area.

WATER-LEVEL MEASUREMENTS

Water-level measurements used in preparation of this report were obtained by steel tape, airline measurements, and electronic sensors, and from reports by well operators. Sixty percent of the observation wells are pumped frequently, and some are pumped daily. Multiple measurements were made when wells were not being pumped. However, antecedent pumping conditions often were not known. Water levels in wells were measured in January and February to minimize effects of pumping. Measurements in wells with comparable depths and screened intervals were selected for construction of the maps. Additional wells in the southern and southwestern parts of the Houston-Galveston region were added to the monitoring network in 1990. Water-level measurements from these wells help better define water-level changes in those parts of the region. The maps were prepared using water levels from 290 wells.

MEASURED COMPACTION

Compaction of subsurface material is being measured by 13 borehole extensometers (wells equipped with compaction monitors) at 11 sites (fig. 5). Historical measurements from 12 extensometers are presented in figure 6. At the Clear Lake site, measurements from a second extensometer of less depth (1,740 feet) are not shown because they duplicate the record of the Clear Lake extensometer presented in figure 6.

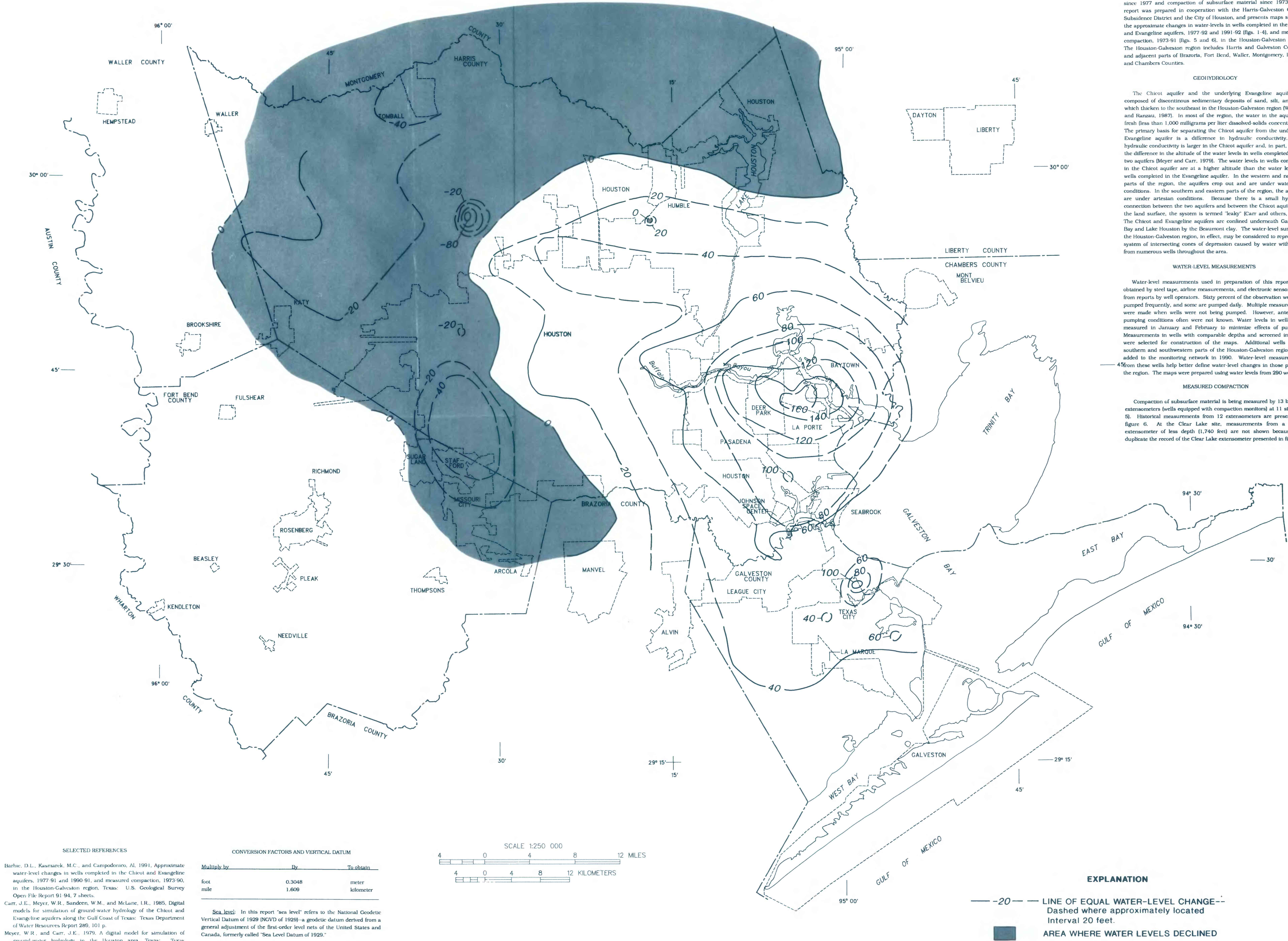


Figure 1.--Map showing approximate change in water levels in wells completed in the Chicot aquifer, 1977-92.

Base modified from Texas Department of Highways
and Public Transportation General Highway Maps

**APPROXIMATE CHANGES IN WATER LEVELS IN WELLS COMPLETED IN THE CHICOT AND EVANGELINE AQUIFERS, 1977-92 AND 1991-92,
AND MEASURED COMPACTION, 1973-91, IN THE HOUSTON-GALVESTON REGION, TEXAS**

By

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